



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



Health Department Offers Free Radon Test Kits for Homeowners

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BURLINGTON – Radon cannot be seen, tasted, or smelled but more Vermonters than ever before can find out if it exists in their homes. The Vermont Department of Health distributed 1,700 free radon test kits to homeowners last year and has more than 3,000 free kits to give away this year.

Radon is a naturally-occurring gas that results from the breakdown of uranium in the bedrock, and is the second leading cause of lung cancer (after smoking) in the United States.

“Radon causes lung cancer over a long period of time, and we know that about one in every eight Vermont homes has elevated levels of radon,” said Lori Cragin, a Health Department epidemiologist.

January is Radon Awareness Month. Because radon levels can change daily, weekly and seasonally, a long-term test of 3-12 months (ideally including a heating season) is the best way to accurately test for the gas.

Radon can get into your home from the soil. A house can act like a large chimney, with warm air rising and escaping out upper floor windows and through cracks in the attic. This creates a vacuum at the lowest level of the house, which can pull the radon from the soil into the home.

The likelihood of a radon problem cannot be predicted by the style, age, or location of a home. All homes are at risk. You cannot know the radon level in a house without testing for it. Testing is easy. Open the kit immediately and leave it in place throughout a heating season, and then mail it back to the Health Department to get your results.

Get a free kit by e-mailing radon@state.vt.us, or call 1-800-439-8550.

Exposure to radon is preventable and fixable through proper venting techniques. If test results show high levels of radon in the air, a mitigation system can be installed at a cost of approximately \$800-\$2,000.

For more information about radon, radon testing and mitigation, visit the Health Department website at healthvermont.gov.

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